those artists that are too sensitive to live life without a buffer, without some kind of defense mechanism between himself and the rest of the world, whether it's drugs, or defensive acting out behavior, or stardom or what have you. Axl, in my view, falls into the tradition of the wounded, gifted, sensitive artist who feels life too intensely to handle it, yet his sensitivity enables him to convey meaning through symbols and images that enrich the rest of us."

What Sugerman has written, as you might expect from the statement above, is a book almost intensely about the band's controversial lead vocalist. He freely admits the other members of the band probably don't get their due in his interpretation of their career.

"Working with Axl is like working with someone like Morrison. It's a mixed blessing. On the one hand you have the honor of working with so creative and ecstatic an individual, but you also have the burden of working with an unpredictable and potentially emotionally volatile individual who steals the spotlight. You make a shitload of money, but you also don't get the recognition you deserve.

"I see Slash as a kind of combination of Manzarek and Krieger. I mean, he almost writes better Axl Rose songs than Axl Rose does. It's the same as Robbie Krieger creating 'Light My Fire' and 'Love me Two Times,' which were perfect Morrison songs. The vision behind Guns N' Roses isn't solely Axl's, but as the lead singer of the band it's his job to hold the spotlight and coalesce the vision, just as Bono does in U2 and Mick Jagger does in the Rolling Stones."

The man who wrote that he felt Jim Morrison was a god in *No One Here Gets Out Alive* is equally effusive in *Appetite For Destruction*, referring to the band as a whole as the death-knell of the Judeo-Christian religious hierarchy. One had to wonder what Sugerman thought later that evening, when, after showing up hours late for their own show, Axl engaged in the kind of provincial demagoguery that has made headlines at almost every stop of the tour since. A clue can be found in something Sugerman said about Guns N' Roses returning rock and roll to its rightful place on the shady side of the street."

"Rock and roll is not the sound of compromise and capitulation. My theory is that great rock and roll should alienate corporate America. Tipper Gore should not like a great rock and roll band. Parents should worry about a great rock and roll band coming to their town and raping their sons and daughters.

"On the other hand, God, it's 1991 and we know better. Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin died for Axl Rose's sins, you might say. He should know better, but it's a testimony to the authenticity of his dilemma that he doesn't. And it's a testimony to the dilemma of many teenagers in America that the music of Guns N' Roses has struck such a responsive chord."

Danny McCue

Danny Sugerman will be signing copies of his book on August 22nd at Tower Records' West 4th Street location.

DANNY SUGERMAN

A Rock And Roll Writer With An Appetite For Destruction

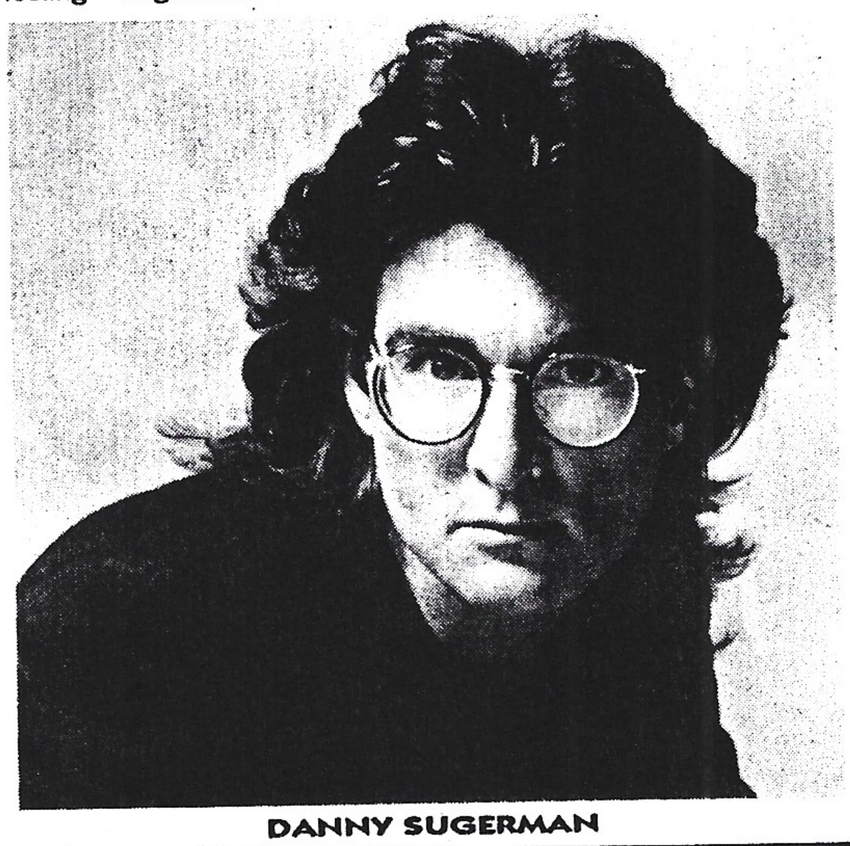
The characters in Danny Sugerman's books make it a habit to live fast, real fast. In *No One Here Gets Out Alive*, the Doors bio he co-wrote with Jerry Hopkins while in the precarious throws of his own drug dependency, he not only chronicled the band's history, but his own relationship with mercurial lead vocalist Jim Morrison. With *Wonderland Avenue*, a non-fiction novel, he continued his literary career by celebrating the excessive lifestyles of the young and charismatic. In his new book, the brazenly titled *Appetite For Destruction: The Days Of Guns N' Roses*, Sugarman again covers much the same territory he's explored in the past: drugs, philosophy, rock and roll and talent always perilously close to being squandered. Despite having the juicy words 'unauthorized biography' emblazoned on the book's cover, however, what one really comes away with this time is the feeling that when Danny Sugerman likes something, he really likes it.

"*Appetite For Destruction* is not a standard biography, although it does contain biographical material in it" said Sugerman during an interview that took place the afternoon of Guns N' Roses concert at the Nassau Coliseum. "It's more of a think piece that looks at rock and roll as a religious subculture."

One has to wonder, as I did, about tackling such an objective through the career of a band who to date have released only one full length album — back in 1987.

"Listen, when I started this book two and a half years ago I thought, 'what if they turn out to be another Knack?' What if "Welcome To The Jungle" is this year's "My Sharona"? What if I'm staking my literary career on a band that makes no more than one album?'

"The bet I made was that Guns N' Roses, specifically Axl, is a real talent and really has something to say. I think he's genuinely one of



DANNY SUGERMAN